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CLAIMS

1. A recombinant nucleic acid molecule comprising a polynucleotide selected from the group consisting of
 - (a) polynucleotides comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide with the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2;
 - (b) polynucleotides comprising the nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1;
 - (c) polynucleotides comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding a fragment of the polypeptide encoded by a polynucleotide of (a) or (b), wherein said nucleotide sequence encodes a protein having β -glucosidase activity;
 - (d) polynucleotides comprising a nucleotide sequence which encodes a polypeptide having a sequence identity of at least 50% to an amino acid sequence encoded by the polynucleotide of (a) or (b), wherein said polypeptide has β -glucosidase activity; and
 - (e) polynucleotides comprising a nucleotide sequence that deviates from the nucleotide sequence defined in (d) by the degeneracy of the genetic code;and a promoter operatively linked to said polynucleotide, said promoter being heterologous with respect to the polynucleotide.
2. The recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 further comprising additional expression control sequences operably linked to said polynucleotide.
3. A vector comprising the polynucleotide defined in claim 1 or the recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 or 2.
4. The vector of claim 3 further comprising expression control sequences operably linked to said polynucleotide.

5. A method for producing genetically engineered host cells comprising introducing the polynucleotide defined in claim 1, the recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 or 2 or the vector of claim 3 or 4 into a host cell.
6. A host cell which is genetically engineered with the polynucleotide defined in claim 1, the recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 or 2 or the vector of claim 3 or 4 or obtainable by the method of claim 5.
7. The host cell of claim 6 which is a bacterial, yeast, fungus, plant or animal cell.
8. A method for the production of a polypeptide encoded by a polynucleotide defined in claim 1 in which the host cell of claim 6 or 7 is cultivated under conditions allowing for the expression of the polypeptide and in which the polypeptide is isolated from the cells and/or the culture medium.
9. A polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide defined in claim 1 or obtainable by the method of claim 8.
10. An antibody specifically recognizing the polypeptide of claim 9.
11. A method for producing a transgenic plant comprising the steps of
 - (a) introducing the polynucleotide defined in claim 1, the recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 or 2 or the vector of claim 3 or 4 into the genome of a plant cell; and
 - (b) regenerating the cell of (a) to a transgenic plant.
12. A transgenic plant or plant tissue comprising the plant cells of claim 7 or obtainable by the method of claim 11.
13. A transgenic plant which shows an increased activity of the polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide defined in claim 1 compared to a corresponding wild-type plant.

14. The transgenic plant of claim 12 or 13 which, upon an increased activity of the protein encoded by the polynucleotide defined in claim 1, shows an increased resistance against a plant pathogen to which a corresponding wild-type plant is susceptible.
15. Propagation material or harvestable parts of the transgenic plant of any one of claims 12 to 14 comprising plant cells of claim 7.
16. A method for conferring pathogen resistance or increased pathogen resistance to a plant comprising the step of providing a transgenic plant in which the activity of the polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide defined in claim 1 is increased.
17. A method for identifying a compound that is hydrolyzed by a polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide defined in claim 1 comprising the steps of
 - (a) contacting a candidate compound with said polypeptide under conditions where said polypeptide is active; and
 - (b) determining whether said candidate compound is hydrolyzed by said polypeptide.
18. A method for identifying a compound that is hydrolyzed by a polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide defined in claim 1 comprising the steps of
 - (a) providing a 3-dimensional structure model of said polypeptide; and
 - (b) determining the structure of a substrate that fits into the 3-dimensional structure model of (a).
19. A method for identifying a compound that is hydrolyzed by a polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide defined in claim 1 comprising the steps of
 - (a) providing a mutant protein of said polypeptide the catalytic activity of which is abolished without losing substrate binding activity;
 - (b) contacting a candidate compound with said mutant protein; and
 - (c) determining whether the candidate compound is bound by said mutant protein.

20. The method of any one of claims 17 to 19 furthermore comprising the step of determining whether the identified compound or a hydrolysis product thereof is capable of inducing or enhancing a defence response against a pathogen in a plant.
21. A method for preparing a plant protection composition comprising the steps of the method of claims 17, 18, 19 and/or 20 and furthermore the step of formulating the identified compound or a hydrolysis product thereof in a form suitable for administering to plants.
22. A compound, a hydrolysis product thereof or a plant protection composition identified or obtained by the method of any one of claims 16 to 21.
23. A kit comprising the polynucleotide defined in claim 1, the recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 or 2, the vector of claim 3 or 4, the polypeptide of claim 9, the antibody of claim 10 or the compound or a hydrolysis product thereof of claim 22.
24. Use of the polynucleotide defined in claim 1, of the recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 or 2, of the vector of claim 3 or 4, of the host cell of claim 6 or 7, of the polypeptide of claim 9, of the antibody of claim 10 or of the transgenic plant of any one of claims 12 to 15 for identifying a compound that is hydrolyzed by a polypeptide encoded by said polynucleotide.
25. Use of the polynucleotide defined in claim 1, of the recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 or 2, of the vector of claim 3 or 4, of the host cell of claim 6 or 7 or of the polypeptide of claim 9, of the antibody of claim 10 or of the transgenic plant of any one of claims 12 to 15 for the preparation of a plant protection composition.
26. Use of the polynucleotide defined in claim 1, of the recombinant nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 or 2, of the vector of claim 3 or 4, of the host cell of claim 6

or 7 or of the polypeptide of claim 9, of the antibody of claim 10 or of the transgenic plant of any one of claims 12 to 15 for establishing or enhancing a pathogen resistance in plants.